

I establish due dates and penalize failures to meet them, but also understand that unexpected emergencies and life in general “get in the way.” As with other aspects of my belief in teaching and learning, I offer this element of trust and understanding: I willingly entertain student requests for extensions from any student who speaks to me about a due date at least 48 hours in advance.

**You may not use any item you have read or viewed already, nor one that is on a planned list in another course for this year. For example, do not try and receive points for a book read in an English course. Please don’t deceive me, or use Cliff, Monarch notes etc. Any effort to violate this will likely receive a “0” on the assignment & notification to the NHS or similar groups if warranted.**

**Value Graded out of 150 points**

Because some items are easier than the norm and others more challenging, I “weight” each item. If you choose to take an easier path, you might max at 100 points, *or* you may choose a more challenging option and *possibly* receive more than 150 points. **Look closely at the topic as well as the potential value of each item.**

Films: A **single** film is worth a maximum of 100 points. A *synthesized* review of **two** related films maxes at 130  
A synthesized review of **three** related films (propose them to me) can earn up to 150 points.

If you choose a film, watch it closely – looking for the bias of camera angles, characters’ physical looks..., background scenery and music, and the order of events (films often mix chronology to draw you in, which is fine, but it can confuse the history.)

Books: *	Indicates an item worth a <b>maximum</b> of...	125 points
**	Indicates an item worth a <b>maximum</b> of	150 points
***	Indicates an item worth a <b>maximum</b> of	158 points
****	Indicates an item worth a <b>maximum</b> of	165 points
+	I may mark a book with a +, indicating it is worth a few more points. e.g. **+ might earn 154.	

**Length** Minimum 1000 words, maximum 2000 words, 11 or 12 point font. (Likely need to lean toward 2000)  
On the first page, provide your name, period, date, book author and title, and word length

**Due Dates**

1st Semester	Set 1	Myths, The Revolution & Founding	M October 25
	Set 2	1800-1860, Slavery and Women	M November 29
	Set 3	Abolition and Civil Rights*	W December 22

2nd Semester	We may alter dates slightly in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester (extending the deadline)		
	Set 4	Civil War through Reconstruction	February 9
	Set 5	Gilded Age, and the West	March 21
	Set 6	Progressivism, Age of Empire and US Foreign Policy*	April 11
	Set 7	1920s – 1950s	May 11

\* Past policy required attendance at evening sessions to write on these. With my new schedule this year, I can not offer these to the extent I have before. This year, you must attend a brief meeting about these topics and procure my permission to write on Vietnam or Civil Rights by November 1<sup>st</sup>. I will post times for these meetings in October.

**Option for extra credit (Due one full week before the end of the particular marking period)**

You may complete ONE extra cultural analysis review every nine weeks. It must be on a topic we have already studied. **A general** guide for extra credit point values, determined by the quality of the work.

Scholarly works: 25-30 points max.      Novels: 15-25 points max.      Films: 8-10 per film

## Overview:

An historical review goes beyond describing the work of scholarship, novel or film or even critiquing its entertainment value. It *must* also assess its historic accuracy, relevance and interpretation, as well as address the perspective of the historical moment, the author (& influences of her/his era); and of the viewer/reader.

An effective, quality review:

- provides a summary of the novel, scholarship, or film.  
(Minimum of 6 specific references to the text needed)
- evaluates the historical accuracy (noting the time it was written or produced and the context of that era as well as the subject it is about).
- provides your judgment of its quality and “interest level.” The use of “I” is not forbidden, but generally is not needed, so **limit its use**. Keep focused on the professional nature of the review.
- establishes the context, **though this does not have to occur with a formal, traditional introduction**
- identifies the author’s argument AND provide your own argument.
- maintains effective mechanics and topic sentences.
- develops multiple body paragraphs that **weave together** a **summary** of the item’s plot, its **historical validity** & your **personal reaction**. Do not plod through a detailed page by page or section by section account of the book. Reviews provide detail, not a virtual transcription of the text.
- explores in depth the historical connections & analysis. **Refer, specifically to class notes**, handouts, the textbook, and/or internet sites. (minimum two, but up to five for the best work) Reflect on these.
  - Does the piece confirm, contradict, extend... LEP? Class notes?...
  - Sp what? Why does this piece matter?
  - include one of the following:
    - Incorporation of book reviews you find on-line. Engage them and include your own original thinking, arguments, and writing.
    - References to historians we have read or learned about in class.
    - References to themes, big ideas, and/or schools of thought we have studied.

**Use specific, short quotes and footnote exact page numbers, following Turabian footnotes**

## DiNardo - APUSH Rubric Book Review/Cultural Analysis Essays - 9/2010

**\*\* Minor adjustments may be made to facilitate feedback**

E (Excellent)   P (Proficient)   A (Adequate)   B (Below Minimum Expectations)   AB (Absent)

<b><u>Writing</u></b>						____/ 40
E	P	A	B	AB	Mechanics, Grammar, Topic Sentences.	
E	P	A	B	AB	Personal perspective via professional prose of the discipline. (limited personal pronouns)	
E	P	A	B	AB	Paragraph formation and flow (e.g.: connected, integration of parts rather than segments; cadence)	
<b><u>Evidence – Content</u> (Demonstrated Command (Breadth and Depth))</b>						____/ 50
E	P	A	B	AB	Varied & specific references from the selection (Quotes as well as your own descriptions)	
E	P	A	B	AB	<u>Citing quality</u> items from class, texts, scholars, schools of thought, personal research...	
<b><u>Analysis and Argument</u> (“Big Ideas”, Personal Perspective)</b>						____/ 60
E	P	A	B	AB	An original, well-developed idea evident throughout the essay	
E	P	A	B	AB	Complete array of themes identified without being a simple, descriptive summary plot/storyline	
E	P	A	B	AB	Evaluation of historical validity of the item with depth of insight and a level of unique original thinking	
E	P	A	B	AB	USE of class, texts, personal research...; referencing scholars from handouts, schools of thought...	

## Published Samples

Two sets of effective book reviews follow. Note how each author offers her/his opinion *without* using “I”.

### Set A. Reviews of *Song Yet Sung* by James McBride (359 pp. Riverhead Books, 2008)

The first two reviews show how two authors can approach the same work a bit differently.

A1. This review offers a wonderfully positive review, though it lacks substantial historical data, references, etc. For example, Ms. Rouvalis asserts that “Only historians will be able to ferret out where history ends and fiction begins.” She effectively weaves in short comments throughout.

Novel tells of fugitive slave's desperate bid for freedom  
Sunday, March 09, 2008, by Cristina Rouvalis, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

James McBride made his reputation with “The Color of Water,” his eloquent memoir about growing up the son of a white mother and black father in New York City. In this, his second novel, he writes again with delicacy about the complicated bonds and prejudices between whites and blacks, but this time he goes back to 1850 and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the land of antebellum plantations.

His heroine is Liz Spocott, a beautiful runaway slave who has the gift of being able to see the future. But first she has to survive the present as someone else's property. In the first few pages of the book, she is shot in the head and kills an attack dog with her bare hands before being nabbed by a feared trader named Patty Cannon, a rogue woman who steals and sells slaves. Liz then leads a violent escape of 14 slaves from Cannon's clutches into the swamps of Maryland, only 80 miles from the freedom line -- so close but so far away. Every page of this lyrical book is infused with savagery and poetry, hopelessness and dreams, deceit and decency of both blacks and whites trapped by the slave trade.

Inspiring McBride to write this historical novel was his visit to the grave of Harriet Tubman, the Maryland woman credited with taking 300 slaves north on her so-called “gospel train” using “The Code,” cryptic signals between slaves. “This book isn't about Mrs. Tubman's life,” he writes in the author's notes. “It's a book that her life inspired. She was a dreamer.” In the swamp, Liz relies on The Code and her mystical power to dream the future. In one sequence: “She dreamed of Negroes driving horseless carriages on shiny rubber wheels with music booming throughout, and fat black children who smoked odd-smelling cigars and walked around with pistols in their pockets and murder in their eyes. ...” Sound familiar? Sometimes these dream sequences, a not-so-subtle jab at modern culture, seem a little contrived. But that is one of McBride's few false notes.

Only historians will be able to ferret out where history ends and fiction begins. But McBride said the character of Cannon, the ferocious slave trader, is based on a real character. Furious about losing 14 slaves, she's hot on Liz's tracks. Cannon is a beautiful Amazon-like woman who terrifies people with her utter lack of conscience and her calculating mind. “Patty herself saw no value in books. She only enjoyed reading the faces of men, particularly slave men, who were the most interesting read of all. ... She had no fear of touching them, even wrestling them from time to time, offering food, shelter, camaraderie, an occasional warm caress, the sense of home.”

A more complicated character is Denwood Long, a tortured soul who is called out of retirement by Liz's owner to find his slave. In the heat of the pursuit of Liz, Denwood realizes it was “he, not the coloreds, who were the real runaways. Running from himself and what he should have been.”

Not everyone is out to get Liz. A young slave named Amber, who is smitten by her beauty, helps hide her, relying on The Code. Amber has his own dreams of freedom, even though he likes his master, Kathleen Sullivan. Kathleen senses his unrest, and she knows in her gut how hard it is to keep a lid on the horror that is slavery: “No matter what the constables said, no matter what the newspaper and politicians declared about the contented, happy slave, no matter ... how many jump-de-broom galas her rich fellow slave owners held in the big house on behalf of their beloved Sambos, Aunt Pollys and Uncle Toms, the eighty-miles-to-the-freedom-line business hung grimly over the eastern shore like a cloud, and Kathleen felt it, every drop it.”

You, too, will feel every drop of it through this amazing action novel.

**A.2** This review by Madison Bell, offers more elements of historical criticism, while still remaining impressed with McBride's work. The first two paragraphs offer the argument, paragraphs 3-6 a "plot summary" – though note the minimal detail, and the 1<sup>st</sup> and final paragraphs context and comparison.

### **Prophetic Dreams**

By Madison Smartt Bell, NY Times, March 2, 2008

*Madison Smartt Bell is the author of numerous books, including a recent biography of Toussaint Louverture.*

"Song Yet Sung" is the second novel by James McBride, best known until now for "The Color of Water," his memoir of growing up as the black son of a white mother. Defining the son of a white mother as 100 percent black is a special device of American racism that has defied logic for more than 200 years. His unusual position may well give McBride an advantage in writing this antebellum story of fugitive slaves. Anyone handling such material runs the risk of reprising "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which, however effective it was as propaganda, has no real claim to the truth of art. McBride's portrayal of the situation is more lucid, better controlled and in the end much more convincing.

"Song Yet Sung" isn't flawless. There are moments, though fortunately not many, when McBride's expositions of the Underground Railroad's communication code look as if he's grappling with a Rubik's Cube. Some elements in the generally masterly plot have to be battered into place at the end — when it seems that McBride, steering clear of [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#)'s viscous sentimentality, overcorrects by applying more tough-minded restraint than is strictly necessary. But these defects are too small and peripheral to seriously detract from the pleasure or value of this book.

The story takes place on Maryland's Eastern Shore — Harriet Tubman's territory. Tubman herself never makes it into the novel, though she is present in the characters' minds as the "Moses" who leads escaping slaves to the promised land of freedom. McBride's heroine, Liz Spocott, has some things in common with Tubman: both women become visionaries after being bashed in the head with a chunk of iron in the course of somebody else's quarrel. Liz's vatic dreams, which begin on Page 1 and continue throughout, provide a sort of Martian view of 21st-century gangsta culture: "Negroes driving horseless carriages on shiny rubber wheels with music booming throughout, and fat black children who smoked odd-smelling cigars and walked around with pistols in their pockets and murder in their eyes. She dreamed of Negro women appearing as flickering images in powerfully lighted boxes that could be seen in sitting rooms far distant, and colored men dressed in garish costumes like children, playing odd sporting games and bragging like drunkards — every bit of pride, decency and morality squeezed clean out of them." The persistence of these visions suffuses the whole book with the mostly unspoken question, Is this really the freedom we're struggling for? "I just thank God I ain't born tomorrow," Liz remarks at one point. "Ain't no freedom in it." McBride is excellent on the unusual social nuances of the backwater that was the antebellum Eastern Shore, where large-scale plantations (and the crops to support them) were few and far between. Most masters owned no more than a handful of slaves, on terms likely to include a quasi-familial intimacy. Many of the Chesapeake Bay watermen owned no slaves at all and took a dim view of the whole system, for reasons of religion or just libertarian temperament. The free black population was significant, especially in towns like Cambridge, which, in the isolation of 1850, could pass for a metropolis.

The action starts quickly with a breakout of slaves imprisoned in a tavern operated by a roguish woman named Patty Cannon and her partners in crime, who hunt down runaways and steal docile slaves from owners they had no plans to flee. Menaced with rape by one of Patty's black accomplices (himself a slave), Liz manages to stab him with a pike clenched in her teeth; she escapes Patty's precincts along with 14 others, who soon scatter and leave her to her own devices.

After rescuing a feral black child from a muskrat trap, Liz is discreetly helped on her way by his father, a long-term runaway known as the Woolman, who lives a speechless life in the swamps. Here, McBride turns a hoary scrap of racist mythology — a savage blue-gummed black man, first cousin to Sasquatch, who lurked in the woods and swamps — on its head, transforming the old bugaboo into a hero comparable to the maroons of Caribbean lore. It's a testament to McBride's skill as a writer that although you really ought not to believe this kind of thing, you do.

Liz returns in the direction of civilization to be taken under the wing of Amber, a slave owned by a waterman's young widow, Kathleen Sullivan, who relies on her blacks as if they were relatives even as she contemplates selling them to settle her debts (and to pre-empt their likely escape). As pursuit closes in, Amber arranges to put Liz on the

Underground Railroad, but this game keeps being forced by various twists in the well-designed, gripping plot. One often risks turning the pages so fast as to miss some of the richness and subtlety of the writing. McBride has a good ear for period black dialect, and a deft touch with all sorts of dialogue. A personal favorite: “You can’t kill me, Gimp. I own a tavern. It’s paid for.”

This author also has a special feel for his villains, and not all of them are villains wholeheartedly. Patty Cannon (a historical figure whom McBride presents under her real name) is wicked to the bone, but she’s also strong and smart and sexy; though you can’t really like her, you can’t help admiring her just a little. A more complex character is Denwood Long, a k a the Gimp, the region’s most expert slave-hunter, grudgingly respected by his quarry because, however unwillingly, he has to admit their humanity: “He disliked making deals with slaves and free blacks,” McBride writes, “because in making deals with them, they became more human to him, and in doing so — try as he might to resist the feeling — they became less slave and more man to him. He could not make a deal with a pig, or a dog, or a piece of pork. But if a man says to another man or woman, I’ll give you this for that, then who are you dealing with? An equal?” One of the untouchable subjects of slave times is that cross-racial comprehension was often found in such apparently improbable circumstances.

Edward P. Jones, who may be the first black American to have written about slavery without rancor, has said that his measured portrayal of the slave masters of Virginia in “The Known World” was like writing about [Hitler](#) from Hitler’s mother’s point of view. In “Song Yet Sung,” McBride has captured a version of Jones’s dispassionate tone, which can deliver the cauterizing power of anger without the corrosive effects of bitterness. That’s a radically new way of telling this old story, and it just might turn out to be balm for a wound that has so far stubbornly refused to heal.

Set B. The second two reviews address works of foreign policy. Rather than showing distinct views of the same text, I offer you two ways of looking at historian John Steele Gordon.

The first entry is Gordon’s review of a recent book. Note his praise as well as scathing criticism. Following this is a review of Gordon’s book from a few years ago by a *New York Times* columnist, but one you should find has sound historical knowledge. Try to see the importance of Gordon’s own lens and inclination – seen in both pieces. See, too, that scholars can find fault and even fundamental disagreements with other scholars yet respect and appreciate their work.

B1. This review summarizes the text in the first two-thirds. Gordon then offers his critique in the final three paragraphs.

“Exploring What Lies Beyond Manifest Destiny”, **By John Steele Gordon, NY Times, June 26, 2008**

John Steele Gordon is the author of “An Empire of Wealth: The Epic History of American Economic Power”(2004) *HABITS OF EMPIRE: A History of American Expansion*, By Walter Nugent, 387 pages. Alfred A. Knopf.

Confined at its birth to the area east of the Mississippi River, by 1867 the United States reached all the way to the Bering Strait. Never has a nation grown so large so quickly. The United States is today the third-largest country in the world, behind only Russia and Canada. More than that, its territory could hardly be richer, more diverse or more advantageously placed on the globe. While much of the land of Russia and Canada is arctic or subarctic, most American territory is in the Temperate Zone. The United States is the only great power with coasts on both the Atlantic and Pacific, placing it effectively at the center of the world.

How this immense and fecund national territory came to be assembled is the story of “Habits of Empire” by Walter Nugent, a professor for many years at Notre Dame and earlier at [Indiana University](#). He divides this history into three phases. The first, which he calls Empire I, takes up most of the book and is concerned with what is now the lower 48 states. While most people remember maps from school and the occasional catchy phrase, like “Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!” and “manifest destiny,” the details are probably hazy at best. And these details are often fascinating and well delineated by Professor Nugent.

The United States acquired much of its present territory by aggressive means, notably what is now the Southwest, when it defeated Mexico in a war and forced it to cede a huge chunk of its almost empty northern reaches (although to be sure America paid Mexico more than it had paid France, in an arm’s-length deal, for the

Louisiana Purchase). But United States aggression also failed in some cases, notably Canada. [Thomas Jefferson](#) thought that its acquisition would be “a mere matter of marching” and that the Canadians would greet the Americans with open arms. They did not, and the United States was very lucky to get out of the War of 1812 with a burned capital and a draw.

In other cases, like those of Florida and Texas, the land was acquired by the simple expedient of American settlers pouring into largely unsettled areas. Spain, facing incipient revolt in both Mexico and South America, realized that it could not hold Florida anyway and sold it. Mexico, a few years later, tried to hold Texas but, led by a remarkably incompetent general, Santa Anna, lost it at the Battle of San Jacinto, where Santa Anna was captured and his army soundly defeated by Sam Houston and his Texas militia.

By 1853 the continental United States was complete and what Professor Nugent calls Empire II began. Empire I had been acquired with the idea of settlement, which occurred in the American West with astonishing speed. Empire II, however, was not meant for settlement, at least at first. The biggest part of Empire II was Alaska, which became American for much the same reason that Louisiana had about 60 years earlier: a European empire wanted to be rid of it and didn’t want Britain to get it.

The rest of Empire II was added in the late 19th century and, except for the Philippines, consisted mostly of small islands in the Pacific, like Guam, American Samoa and Hawaii. Puerto Rico and, finally, the Virgin Islands, bought from Denmark in 1917, rounded out this overseas empire. But a major part of Empire II was the control the United States exercised over foreign countries that were nominally independent. American protectorates were established in many countries in the Caribbean basin, with the [Marines](#) sent to keep peace (and, of course, safeguard American commercial interests). But with the end of World War I the American taste for foreign empire began to evaporate. By the middle of the 1930s the Marines were out of places like Nicaragua, and the Philippines was self-governing and on its way to independence.

Up to this point “Habits of Empire” is both a readable and valuable work in American history. Unfortunately the author felt compelled to add a postscript, “The Global Empire,” on the United States in the post-World War II world. He calls this phase of American history Empire III, and his depiction of it is somewhere between highly tendentious and simply, well, silly. For one thing, he covers 63 years of enormous global change in a mere 12 pages, which doesn’t leave much room for explaining extremely complex events or providing context. For instance, Professor Nugent writes, quoting with obvious approval another historian ([Robert Kagan](#)), that globalization is simply “‘a process whereby American-style market economics engulfed nearly the entire world’ in a manner similar to how white Americans put Indians’ land ‘to better use’ in the 1800s.” To describe globalization as nothing more than American economic imperialism is ludicrous. He might at least have noted that globalization has enormously enriched the entire world, not just the United States.

For another, he is often wrong on his facts. He writes that “there was no significant peace dividend” after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of communism, and that there were no military base closings. In fact the total Department of Defense budget, in constant dollars, fell by more than 30 percent between 1989 and 1998, and there have been five rounds of base closings, enacted despite considerable political pain. In short, he buys completely into the visceral anti-Americanism, seeing American self-aggrandizing imperialism everywhere while scarcely noting that the free world was engaged in a decades-long, worldwide struggle against a ruthless tyranny.

In all, “Habits of Empire” is an excellent book as long as one ignores the historical claptrap of the postscript, which is an embarrassment to the author and publisher and an insult to the reader.

B2. This review provides its argument in the first and the final two paragraphs.

*“How a Struggling Colony Became an Economic Colossus” - By William Grimes, NY Times, Dec.3, 2004 – AN EMPIRE OF WEALTH: The Epic History of American Economic Power John Steele Gordon. 2004*

The United States occupies 6 percent of the world's land mass and has 6 percent of its people, but it accounts for nearly a third of the world's gross domestic product and leads in nearly every category of economic competition. How did this happen? That is the question addressed by John Steele Gordon in his colorful, entertaining history of the American economy, “An Empire of Wealth: The Epic History of American Economic Power.” Mr. Gordon, a columnist for American Heritage who has written a history of Wall Street and the laying of the trans-Atlantic cable, does not offer much in the way of analysis. Rather, he presents the essential ideas and innovations that have propelled the American economy since its earliest days, and illustrates them with striking examples. He has

produced the written equivalent of a PBS "American Experience" documentary, a gaudy cavalcade of facts, outsize personalities and fascinating inventions that moves along at a brisk clip.

From the outset, Americans had money on their minds. Jamestown, as Mr. Gordon reminds us, was founded not by the English state but by a profit-seeking corporation. The early Puritan merchants would often write, at the head of their ledgers, "in the name of God and profit." It was John Winthrop, son of the great Puritan who spoke of creating "a city upon a hill," who saw in America's forests the foundation for an iron industry, which at that time relied chiefly on charcoal rather than coal. Armed with a business plan, he raised 15,000 pounds from investors, a sum that Mr. Gordon helpfully translates by noting that the highest annual salary in Massachusetts in 1648 was 90 pounds.

Mr. Gordon relishes the stories of big men with big ideas that produced big economic results. His hero is Alexander Hamilton, father of central banking, ensurer of a sound money supply, queller of panics, enemy of shady speculators. His *bête noire* is Thomas Jefferson, whose misguided populism and hatred of banks led him to dismantle Hamilton's elegant financial regulatory system, condemning the American economy, for nearly 200 years, to a volatility unknown elsewhere in the Western world. "American monetary authorities would not - indeed could not - intervene decisively to abort a market panic before it spiraled out of control for another 195 years," Mr. Gordon writes.

The booms and the busts were stupendous. The empire of wealth grew, like a teenager, in astounding, uncontrolled bursts, which Mr. Gordon measures enthusiastically. Already, in the colonial era, America was rich. Only about 8 percent of colonists in their 40's were poor, and even fewer in their 50's. Native-born American soldiers in the Revolutionary War were on average a full two inches taller than their British opponents. With the opening of the Erie Canal, the same ton of flour that took three weeks to move from Buffalo to New York, at a cost of \$120, made the trip in eight days, at a cost of \$6, and New York almost overnight turned into the economic powerhouse that Oliver Wendell Holmes, in Boston, called "that tongue that is licking up the cream of commerce and finance of a continent."

Invention and expansion moved full speed ahead, even though many of the country's financial structures were primitive. On March 16, 1830, the New York Stock and Exchange Board, precursor to the present-day New York Stock Exchange, traded a grand total of 31 shares. Financial panics ended not with government action, but when plutocrats like J. P. Morgan stepped in and flooded the market with cash. The monetary system was chaotic. In the 1850's there were more than 7,000 kinds of bank notes in circulation, and more than 5,000 fraudulent or counterfeit notes. A semblance of order came in March 1865 when Congress passed a bill to tax bank notes issued by state-chartered banks. By the end of the Civil War, the country had only two forms of paper currency, national bank notes backed by bank reserves, and greenbacks, so called because they were printed with green ink on the back.

Mr. Gordon, in telling his tale, keeps a sharp eye out for the unintended consequences of economic change. They provide some of his most arresting facts. The McCormick reaper, by throwing farm laborers off the land, provided the manpower for the expansion of American industry after the Civil War. The high prices for horses during the First World War caused American farmers to adopt tractors much faster than they otherwise would have. Technology gives with one hand and takes away with the other, however. The rise of the automobile created a crisis for American farmers, who in 1900 had devoted fully a third of their land to growing oats and hay for horses. By 1929 the horses were almost all gone, and the land set aside for fodder now produced food crops, driving down prices.

This is popular history, written almost entirely from secondary sources, with a bare sprinkling of footnotes. The facts are not always correct. The quick-lunch counters frequented by Wall Street brokers were old news by the 1860's, when Mr. Gordon claims they were invented. It is simply bizarre to state that railroads never make an appearance in the works of Dickens; in "Dombey and Son," the railroad is virtually a character. And the "Mr. Carlisle" in William Jennings Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech is not Thomas Carlyle, but John G. Carlisle, Grover Cleveland's secretary of the treasury.

These are small bumps on an otherwise smoothly paved superhighway that whooshes the reader onward, ever faster, toward a glorious American future. In his breathless conclusion (e-mail! the integrated circuit! online pizza delivery! the Drudge report!), Mr. Gordon envisions more, much more, of the same, despite the shadows of war. As Cicero put it, "The sinews of war are infinite money," and that's what the American empire, the first to rely on economic power rather than conquest, is uniquely capable of creating.



# Options

**The following list contains a range of options, though I am open to considering one you propose. YOU MUST CONFIRM ANY ITEM NOT ON THIS LIST WITH ME BEFORE YOU SUBMIT IT.**

I may add items during the year. If so, they will be noted on the wiki's electronic version.

## Set 1 Due by October 25, 2010

### Myths, Meaning and Memory

#### Myths and America

- \*\*+ Ray Raphael. *Founding Myths*
- \*\* Jim Cullen. *The American Dream – A Short History of an Idea that Shaped a Nation*. (2003)  
A more triumphal account, provides a sound overview with engaging anecdotes.
- \*\*\* James Loewen.  
*Lies My Teacher Told Me* (mid-1990s) - A powerful challenge to authority (i.e. teachers ☺).  
*Lies Across America* (1999)  
A fascinating examination of public placards & how popular memory of events often distorts the historic record.
- \*\*\* John Patrick Diggins. *On Hallowed Ground: Abraham Lincoln and the Foundation of American History*. (2000)  
Argues that free labor, property rights, and self-determination are hallmarks of American history and guide us to more common ideals than present politics suggest.

#### On Liberty, Freedom and the American Dream

- \*\*\* David Hackett Fischer. *Liberty and Freedom* (2005)  
Yes massive, but well worth it, with great visuals.
- \*\*\*+ Eric Foner. *The Story of American Freedom* (1995)  
A terrific scholar & writer, Foner argues for the contested development of freedom and liberty throughout our history.
- \*\* Stephen Breyer, *Active Liberty* (2005)
- \*\*+ Charles Fried, *Modern Liberty and the Limits of Government* (2006)
- \*\*\* George Lakoff. *Whose Freedom: The Battle over America's Most Important Idea*. 2006.  
A challenge to the dominant, conservative definition of freedom, and a wide-ranging advocacy approach.
- \*\*\* Harvey Kaye, *Thomas Paine and the Promise of America*, 2005/06
- \*\*\* Jedediah Purdy, *A Tolerable Anarchy, Rebels, reactionaries and the Making of American Freedom*. (2009)
- \*\*\*+ HW Brands, *American Dream: The US Since 1945*, 2010
- \*\*\*+ Gail Collins, *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women From the 1960s to the Present*, 2009
- \*\*+\*\*\* F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, 1944 (2007 edition with intro by Bruce Caldwell helps). A classic challenge to centralized government planning.
- \*\*+\*\*\* Benjamin Barber, *Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole*, 2006.

#### On the 1950s version of The Dream

- \*\*+ Sloane Wilson. *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1955). This novel coined a phrase that dominated the era. A great novel and movie. See film ALSO for added bonus.
- \*\*\* Rona Jaffe. *The Best of Everything* (1958)  
Little-known today, Jaffe explores the lives of 4 working women – weaving together class & gender from the 50s.

#### Non-Fiction:

- \*\*+ Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Affluent Society*
- \*\*\* Riesman, David. *The Lonely Crowd*
- \*\*\* William Whyte, *The Organization Man*

#### On religion

- \*\* Stephen Prothero. *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know – and Doesn't* (2007)  
A bestseller, argues for the central place of religion in American history and decries the limited knowledge about various faiths among Americans today.
- \*\*\* Susan Jacoby. *Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism* (2004)



## Set 1 continued

### The Revolution and Founding

- \*\*\*+ Thomas West. *Vindicating the Founders*  
An explicit defense of the framers and their radicalism.
- \*\*\*+ Gordon Wood. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (1991)  
An icon of intellectual history presents his view of the influence of great men and ideas.
- \*\*\*\* Gary Nash. *The Unknown Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (2005)  
A radical's view of those forgotten in most texts.
- \*\* Joseph Ellis. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (2000) – An engaging survey of six moments critical to our nation's beginning. Smoothly written, these “stand alone” chapters offer an array of interesting anecdotes.
- \*\* David McCullough. *1776* (2005)  
The acclaimed ex-Pittsburgher reviews this most important year – one that very well could have gone far worse.
- \*\*\* David Hackett Fischer. *Washington's Crossing* (2004)  
Revives the military genius and contribution of the nation's first general.

**1800 to 1860**

- \*\* Donald Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*
- \*\*\* John Ehle, *Trail of Tears: The Rise and Fall of the Cherokee Nation*
- \*\* Mark Holloway, *Heavens on Earth: Utopian Communities in America: 1680-1880* (on utopian communities in Am.)
- \*\*\* HW Brands. *The Age of Gold: The California Gold Rush and the New American Dream* (2002)  
A neat account of the impact of this massive global search for instant wealth.
- \*\* Nancy Lusignea Schultz. *Fire and Roses: The Burning of the Charlestown Convent, 1834* (2000)  
A gripping account of anti-Catholic hatred and violence.
- \*\* John Bailey. *The Lost German Slave Girl: The Extraordinary True Story of Sally Miller and Her Fight for Freedom in Old New Orleans*. (2003)

**Slavery**

- \*+ Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave*. Amazing first hand account
- \*\*\* Edward Jones. *The Known World* (2003) - Novel about a black family and slavery.
- \*\*\* Edward Ball. *Slaves in the Family*
- \*\*\* Michael Wayne. *Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South* (2001)  
Based on an 1857 incident
- \*\*\* Marcus Rediker. *The Slave Ship: A Human History*. (2007)  
A detailed and vivid account of the conditions aboard slave ships, spanning two centuries.

**Women's History and Feminism**

- \*\* *Herland*. Charlotte Perkins Gillman.  
An imaginative utopia in which women control their world.
- \*\*\* Betty Freidan – *The Feminine Mystique* – 1966 a powerful (though longer) expose of despair among American women in the 1950s and their conflicted desires
- \*\*+ Sue Kaufman. *Diary of a Mad Housewife*. (1967)  
A bit disturbing – and a bit shocking (please beware of potentially being offended), Kaufman explores the experience of a portion of women from the era.
- \*\*\* Rona Jaffe. *The Best of Everything* (1958)  
Little-known today, Jaffe explores the lives of 4 working women – weaving together class & gender from the 50s  
\*\*\* Judith Warner, *Perfect Madness: Motherhood in the Age of Anxiety*. (2005)
- \*\*\*+ Gail Collins, *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women From 1960 to the Present* (2009)  
A popular journalist surveys women's history over the past half century.

**Abolition and Resistance**

- \*\*\*+ Harriett B. Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* - A classic – it moved a nation, and – according to Lincoln – started the war.
- \*\*\* Fergus Bordewich. *Bound for Canaan: The Epic Story of the Underground Railroad, America's First Civil Rights Movement*. 2005. A beautifully written narrative by a journalist who knows how to tell stories.
- \*\*+ David Blight. *A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom*. (2007)  
An acclaimed account of two narratives from men whose lives intersect late in the era of slavery.
- \*\*\*\* Melvin Patrick Ely. *Israel on the Appomattox: A Southern Experiment in Black Freedom from the 1790s Through the Civil War*(2004). Top selling book about a community which began with whites and blacks living together, only to stressed by the entrenchment of slavery.
- \*\*\* James Sidbury. *Ploughshares Into Swords: Race, Rebellion, and Identity in Gabriel's Virginia, 1730-1810* (1997)  
Examines the impact of rebellion
- \*\*+ David Robertson. *Denmark Vesey: The Buried Hist.of Am's Largest Slave Rebellion & the Man Who Led It* (1999)
- \*\*\*+ William Styron. *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967). A novel about a massive planned slave revolt in 1831, led by Turner, an educated slave who led a group of fellow escapees on a bloody trail through southeastern Virginia.
- On The Amistad (An on-board slave revolt and court case swept the nation's attention in the mid-90s with a blockbuster film
- \*\* Howard Jones. *Mutiny on the Amistad: The Saga of a Slave Revolt and its Impact on American abolition, law & diplomacy* 1987). Consider seeing the film also. Find journals, newspaper stories... from 1997 – 1998 on the movie and identify some key issues being debated.
- \*\*\*\* David Brion Davis. *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World*. (2006)  
The latest what many consider the best scholar in the field on this topic.

**Civil Rights (You must attend at least two evening sessions to complete one of these options)**

**Films on the Civil Rights Movement**

- The Long Walk Home* (Montgomery)                      *Freedom on My Mind* (On Freedom Summer)      *Malcolm X* (Spike Lee)  
*Make It Plain* (documentary on Malcolm X)      *Mississippi Burning* (1988)
- \*\* Claude Brown, *Manchild in The Promised Land*
- \*\*+ Maya Angelou. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. A great personal and social exploration of southern black culture.
- \*\* James Baldwin. \*\* *Go Tell It On The Mountain* (1953)      or      \* *The Fire Next Time* (1963)  
From one of the most prolific and powerful writers between 1950 and the 1980s.
- \*\* John Howard Griffith. *Black Like Me* (1961). A controversial account of a white man who colored his skin and “passed” as black. It CAN offer some insight into white pathology, though.
- \*\*\* Anne Moody, *Coming of Age in Mississippi*. (1968) A terrific, though long, account of a young girl maturing through segregation and “The” movement. High school age kids really enjoy its age relevance
- \*\* Toni Morrison. *Beloved*, *The Bluest Eyes*, OR *Song of Solomon* or many others. Morrison is a captivating writer.
- \*\* Alice Walker. *The Color Purple*
- \*\*\* Richard Wright. (Writes “Pre Civil Rights Era” and joins race with politically left ideals) - *Native Son* (1940)
- \*\*\* Stephan Talty. *Mulatto America: At the Crossroads of Black and White America*. (2003)  
A cultural critique explores the intersection of white and black culture/relationships.
- \*\*\*\* Elizabeth Jacoway. *Turn Away Thy Son: Little Rock, The Crisis that Shocked a Nation*. 2007. This account details the perspective of many not often considered with this event. .
- \*\*\*\* Michael Honey. *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign*. (2007)  
Americans forget too often MLK's last three years and especially his campaign for economic justice revealed in detail in this account.

## Second Semester

### Set 4 Due February 9th

#### Civil War and Reconstruction

- \*\*\* Nelson Lankford. *Richmond Burning: The Last Days of the Confederate Capital* (2002)
- \*\*\* Jeff Shara. *Gods and Generals* (1997)  
Shara is one of the premier military novelists alive. (View the film as a comparative effort and expand value)
- \*\*\* E.L. Doctorow. *The March* (2005)  
Prolific novelist turns his attention to a fictional story inspired by General Sherman --- & American literature.
- \*\*\* James Swanson. *Manhunt: The 12 Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer*.
- \*\*+ Douglas Wilson. *Lincoln's Sword: The Presidency and the Power of Words*.  
From one of the leading current scholars on Lincoln.

#### Films.

- Glory*. (1989). Mathew Broderick, Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman. Robert Shaw leader the Massachusetts 54th, an all-black volunteer company, fighting prejudices of both his own Union army and the Confederates
- Outlaw Josey Wales*. (1976) - Clint Eastwood, Chief Dan George. A Missouri farmer joins a Confederate guerilla unit; winds up on the run from Union soldiers who murdered his family.

**Gilded Age and the West**

The West

Industrialism

- \*\*\*\* Paul Krause, *The Battle for Homestead, 1880-1892*  
An engaging and sympathetic account of a workers' republic
- \*\* C.Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*  
Strange Career is a short book, but influenced a generation of scholar-activists (pub. 1955)
- \*\*\* Robert Weibe, *A Search for Order*  
A ground breaking argument about the impact of industrialization
- \*\*\* Linda Gordon, *The Great Arizona Orphan Abduction*  
A great writer engages you in a novel-like setting about Catholicism, ethnicity/race, and gender roles.
- \*\*\*\* Erik Larsen. 2003, *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, & Madness at the Fair that Changed America*. .  
This novel integrates a history of the 1893 World's Fair, tracing the development and importance of the Fair with the individual story of a serial murder, Dr. Holmes.
- \*\* *Looking Backward*. Edward Bellamy. C. 1887.  
Bellamy, a socialist, wrote this as a critique of the industrial age. Its main character falls asleep and wakes up a century later in a utopian world mechanized, clean, efficient, and "free" of exploitation.
- \*\*\*\* *Out of This Furnace*. Thomas Bell. 19??(?)  
An older novel that follows three generations of an immigrant family through mill and industrial life in the Pittsburgh area.
- \*\*\* Seymour Lipsett & Gary Marks. *It Didn't Happen Here: Why Socialism Failed in the US* (2000)

**Progressivism****Race**

- \*\*\* W.E.B DuBois, *Souls of Black Folks*  
Probes the depth of “two-ness” in black America. A series of articles revealing DuBois’ keen intellect and righteousness.
- \*\*\*\* Mark Curriden and Leroy Phillips, Jr. *Contempt of Court: The Turn of the Century Lynching that launched a 100 years of Federalism* -  
Not a novel, but great writing and a powerful story of a rape, lynching, and the legal process that unjustly convicted Ed Johnson and indirectly allowed his lynching just after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- \*\*\* Michael D’Orso, *Like Judgment Day: The Ruin and Redemption of a Town Called Rosewood*  
Again, not quite a novel, this example of wonderful social history tells the story of Rosewood, FL, a black town burned to the ground because of false accusations of rape. It carries the story through the 1990s’ efforts to receive payment for damages.
- \*\*\* David Oshinsky. “*Worse Than Slavery*”: *Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice*, 1996.  
Details the experiences at the nation’s most famous prison farm in Mississippi, and its reputation for abuse.
- \*\*\*+ Sherrilyn Ifill. *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the Twenty-first Century* (2007)  
Powerful perspective on how we might heal the legacy of lynching in America.
- \*\*\* Tom Madigan. *The Burning: Massacre, Destruction, and the Tulsa Race Riots of 1921*
- \*\*\*\* David von Dreble. *Triangle: The Fire That Changed America* (2003).  
Also not a novel, but a great presentation of the events surrounding the Triangle Shirtwaist fire.
- \*\* Erik Larsen. *Isaac’s Storm*. Historical fiction about the great 1900 hurricane that destroyed Galveston, TX.

**The Age of Empire, and US Foreign Policy****Overall**

- \*\*\*\* Geoffrey Stone. *Perilous Times: Free Speech in Wartime: From the Sedition Act of 1798 to the War on Terrorism*. 2004.  
A dense but fascinating and detailed account of limits on free speech.
- \*\*\*+ Steven Kinzer. *Overthrow: America’s Century of Regime Change From Hawaii to Iraq*.  
A smooth, chronological account of US intervention over the course of 120 years

**Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries**

- \*\*\* Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America’s Empire in the Philippines*  
One of the premier scholars on US policy in Asia focuses on our brief age of imperialism.
- \*\*\*+ David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*  
A couple decades old, this sweeping account of WWI’s political, social, and cultural impact is a smooth read.

**10: WWII****Books**

- \*\* Kathy Haines Miller. A local author, has two novels featuring “Rosie Winter” – a budding actress and sometimes detective. The murder/mystery is set in the context of WWII. (I enjoyed them, but in the interest of full disclosure, I know the author. See me for titles, or check out the Public Library – it has a copy of each)
- \*\* Bob Greene, *Once Upon a Town* (2002) – the story of the North Platte Canteen
- \*\*\* Norman Mailer, *The Naked and The Dead*, 1948. Acclaimed novel based on his personal experiences in the Pacific.
- \*\* Jones, James. *The Thin Red Line*. NY: Scribner, 1962. The assault on Guadalcanal
- \*+ John Hersey. *Hiroshima* – a survey of six survivors of the bombing at Hiroshima
- \*\*\*+ Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking* – The Japanese assault on China, 1937
- \*\*\* William Manchester, *Goodbye Darkness* – personal account of battle in the Pacific
- \*\* Hampton Sides, *Ghost Soldiers* – Bataan march and rescue
- Not novels, but good work: \*\*James Bradley *Flags of Our Fathers*      \*\*\*Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation*

## Films:

*The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957, 161 minutes). Classic film – set in 1944 New Guinea (Pacific Theater)  
Explores Japanese use of prison labor.

*A Bridge Too Far* (1977, 175 minutes). - A detailed, though not so dramatic, retelling of Operation Market Garden.

*The Halls of Montezuma* (1950, 113 minutes) American personnel in the Pacific, 1944

*Fat Man and Little Boy* (1989, 126 minutes) - Somewhat fictionalized story of the Manhattan Project. So-So account

*Hiroshima: Out of the Ashes* (1990, 100 minutes). A fairly fact-based film exploring the impact of the bomb on various families and actors.

*In Harm's Way* (1965) - Based on James Bassett's novel, with John as the gutsy but unlucky Adm. Rockwell Torrey. Starting with an exciting recreation of the attack on Pearl Harbor, this film is full of storm, strife and studio tank sea battles.

*Memphis Belle* (1990, 106 minutes) - Partly fictional account of a B17 crew as it takes its last mission over Europe

*Patton* (1970, 171 minutes). Considered a classic – George C. Scott stars in an outstanding performance of Patton.

*Tora, Tora, Tora* (1970, 161 minutes) - American-Japanese co-production about the bombing of Pearl Harbor

*A Walk in the Sun*. 1945, 117 minutes. The brutality of battle, centered at Salerno, Italy, 1943.

*Saving Private Ryan* – can only be seen IF you view *The Longest Day* (1962, 180 minutes)  
An all-star cast recreating the D-Day invasion (Need parental permission to view it)

*Thin Red Line* (1964; 1998). Must see both versions and offer a comparison/contrast

## Cold War

\*\*\*\* Stuart Herrington. *Traitors Among Us: Inside the Spy Catcher's World* (2000)

## Vietnam

\*\*\* Stuart Herrington. *Stalking the Vietcong: Inside Operation Phoenix, a Personal Account* 2004.

\*\*\* Caputo, Philip. *A Rumor of War* (1977) An early veteran's account (1965-66), though he returned to Vietnam as a journalist in 1975. This is his story, not his politics (though he is shaped by an anti-war sentiment).

\*\*\* James Webb. *Fields of Fire*. (1978)  
Veteran, novelist, commander of Marines, Webb engages the reader deeply.

\*\*\*+ Greene, Graham. *The Quiet American*. (1955?) A CLASSIC British account, eerily foreshadows much of the American attitude and experience. Consider reading it and then viewing the recent film.  
Or William Lederer & Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (ditto, this too is eerily prescient)

\*\*\* Lt. General Harold Moore and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once and Young*

\*\*\* Herr, Michael. *Dispatches* (1968). Herr went to Vietnam as a correspondent in 1967. While great writing, it is sometimes tough for students.

\*\* O'Brien, Tim. (Veteran, 1969) - Some of the best writing on Vietnam and its impact available. Possibly THE most engaging veteran writer I have found. O'Brien's ambivalence about the war comes out clearly.  
*Going After Cacciato* (1979 ?) *The Things They Carried* (1990?) *In the Lake of the Woods* (1994?)

\*\*\*\* Sheehan, Neil. *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (1988). Both a biography of an early (1963) combatant & analyst (Vann) & a journalist's account of the war. Sheehan earns highest respect from vets.

\*\* Stockdale, Adm. James B. *A Vietnam Experience: Ten Years of Reflection* (1984). A series of speeches and reflections made by a POW (7 ½ years) and later policy analyst. OUTSTANDING philosophical perspectives.

\*\* Ron Kovic, *Born on the Fourth of July* An autobiographical story of a disabled Vet who becomes bitter & enraged.

## Recent

\*\*\*\* Seymour Hersh. *Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib*. 2006  
A leading investigative journalist of our time, Hersh details the extent of knowledge of events at Abu Ghraib.

\*\*\*\* Thomas Ricks. *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. 2006/07  
A top-tier journalist offers a scathing critique of the waging of the war in Iraq.

\*\*\* Frederick A.O. Schwartz & Aziz Hug. *Unchecked and Unbalanced: Presidential Power in a Time of Terror*. 2007

\*\*\* John Yoo. *War by Other Means: An Insider's Account of the War on Terror*. 2006  
The defense of a unitary executive and necessary actions to confront terrorism.

\*\*\*+ Robert Kagan. *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World, from its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the 21st Century* (2006)  
A good example of the neo-conservative perspective.

\*\*\* Fareed Zakaria. *The Post-American World*. (2008)  
From the respected international editor of *Newsweek* An acclimation of modern, western and American ideals, and a convincing argument that while the world will change, it is not a dire future at all for the U.S.



**1920s – 1930s**

**NOVELS**

- \*\* James Farrell, *Studs Lonigan* (1932)  
A portrait of a lost, hardened working-class youth
- \*\* Margaret Mitchell, *Gone With the Wind* (1936)  
A romance set in an earlier era. Recall our study of race in previous units
- \*\* Nathaniel West (died in 1940 at the age of 37). Must read both *The Day of the Locust* (most famous piece) and *Miss Lonelyhearts* (an advice columnist becomes saddened from the stories in the letters sent in).
- \*\*\* EL Doctorow *Ragtime* (1975)  
A prolific writer traces three families and their experiences in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He drops names you'll recognize and weaves an exciting narrative merging dreams and tragedy.
- \*\*\* Timothy Egan. *The Worst Hard Time*. (2006)  
Focuses on the Dust Bowl years of the Great Depression, humanizing the most dire economic years in American history.

**Modern Films**

- Places in the Heart* 1984 102 minutes - Sally Fields and Danny Glover - Dust Bowl America
- The Cradle Will Rock* (1999)  
Tim Robbins production about a Federal Theater Project in the 1930s addressing labor strikes, anticommunism, and censorship.
- One Third of a Nation* (1997) - A federal Theater Project play dramatizing housing problems
- Union Maids* (1997) - Women organizing in the 1930s
- The Lemon-Grove Incident* (1985)  
About Mexican-American Civil Rights activism focusing on school integration
- Huey Long* (1986) - Portrait of the "most dangerous man in America."
- The Electric Valley* (1983) - About the Tennessee Valley Authority
- The World of Tomorrow* - Actually a documentary – about the 1939 World's Fair
- By Frank Capra:
  - It's A Wonderful Life* (1946).  
Looking back at the 1930s, Capra teaches America how and what to remember: the individual as hero, the importance of community and kindness, and a forgiving, even appreciative attitude toward imperfections that mark not only humans, but even angels. [xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/FILM/filmfr.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/FILM/filmfr.html)
  - It Happened One Night* 1934 - A comedy, and his breakthrough film.
  - Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* 1936 - Small-town man goes to the big city and becomes disillusioned
  - Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* 1939

**1950s**

**Films**

- The Big Lift* (1950, 120 minutes) - A glorified (and possibly accurately so) depiction of the Berlin Airlift.
- Pork Chop Hill* (1959, 97 minutes)  
Highly acclaimed and accurate account of the brutal fighting needed to take Pork Chop Hill during the Korean War.
- Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964, but in the era's themes)  
Stanley Kubrick – a farcical account of deception, mistrust, and coping with the atomic age. Students either LOVE this film, or find it THE worst they have every seen.
- Blackboard Jungle* (1955, 101 minutes)  
A response/commentary on the (alleged) juvenile crime wave of the 1950s and crisis created by – comic books.  
A NYC teacher tries to maintain discipline... Sidney Poitier stars
- Quiz Show* (1994, 130 Minutes). About the fixed results of America's most popular quiz show of the decade.
- Rebel Without a Cause*. One of James Dean's 3 films.
- Strategic Air Command* (1955, 114 minutes)  
A clear and vivid account of the Cold War years of the early 1950s. Starring Jimmy Stewart as a pilot.
- On the Beach* (1959, 133 minutes)  
Adaptation of Nevil Shute's classic and disturbing novel about nuclear annihilation.

*On the Waterfront* (1954)

Marlin Brando as an ex-prizefighter turned longshoreman standing up to a corrupt union

*American Graffiti*, (1973, 110 minutes)

A romantic account of a near-perfect 1950s existence, set in a small-town, 1962.

*The Bridges at Toko-Ri* (1954, 103 minutes)

Adaptation of Michener's novel, an account of naval aviation during the Korean War, and divided views on the war.

*The Manchurian Candidate* (1962, 126 minutes)

A popular play on a term "Manchurian Candidate" coined to refer to American POWs from Korea who return, having been brainwashed by Chinese controllers to kill

*I Was Communist for the FBI*

From the ad: "I had to sell out my own girl--so would you! I was under the toughest orders a guy could get! I stood by and watched my brother slugged...I started a riot that ran red with terror...I learned every dirty rule in their book--and had to use them--because I was a communist--*but* I WAS A COMMUNIST FOR THE FBI."

Also consider: *I Married a Communist*

Or view together these films representative of early sci-fi genre symbolic of Soviet threat

*Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Them*

*The Russians are Coming, The Russians are Coming* (1966, 120 minutes)

addresses the stereotype of Russians as our mortal enemy

## NOVELS

(A nice array that sheds light onto the culture of the "Silent Generation" (as demographers call it)

\*\* Bradbury, Ray. *The Martian Chronicles* (1950)

*Fahrenheit 451*

Both involve early sci-fi genre statements. 451 offers an intriguing statement about book-burning...

\*\* Burdick, Eugene and Harvey Wheeler. *Fail-Safe* (from 1964, but in the topic mode)

\*\* Kerouac, Jack. *On the Road* (1957) - The anthem of the Beat generation

\*\* Metalious, Grace. *Peyton Place* (1956)

\*\* Nabokov, Vladimir. *Lolita* (1955)

The subject matter is sensitive and the main character disturbing. It's a famous piece, but make sure your parents are okay with you reading it.

\*\* Michener, James. *The Bridges at Tokyo-Ri* (1954, re-released this year)

An account of naval aviation during the Korean War, and divided views on the war.

\*\* Shute, Nevil. *On the Beach* (1957). On nuclear attacks.

\*\*\*+ Wilson, Sloane. *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1955). This novel coined a phrase that dominated the era. A great novel and movie. See film ALSO for added bonus.

## Non-Fiction:

\*\*\*+ Galbraith, John Kenneth. *The Affluent Society*

\*+ Michael Harrington, *The Other America* (poverty in America)

\*\*\* Riesman, David. *The Lonely Crowd*

## Some Random Titles

\*\*\* John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge. *The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America* (2005)

**Writers for *The Economist*** present an overview on the rise and influence of conservative values in America.

\*\* **Ken Kesey, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest***

This grim satire, first published in 1962, is the story of an energetic con man who seeks institutionalization as a means of escaping the rigors of a prison work farm. One of a series on the disillusionment with the system.

\*\*\* Rachel Carson – *Silent Spring* 1962 - the "beginning" of the Environmental movement